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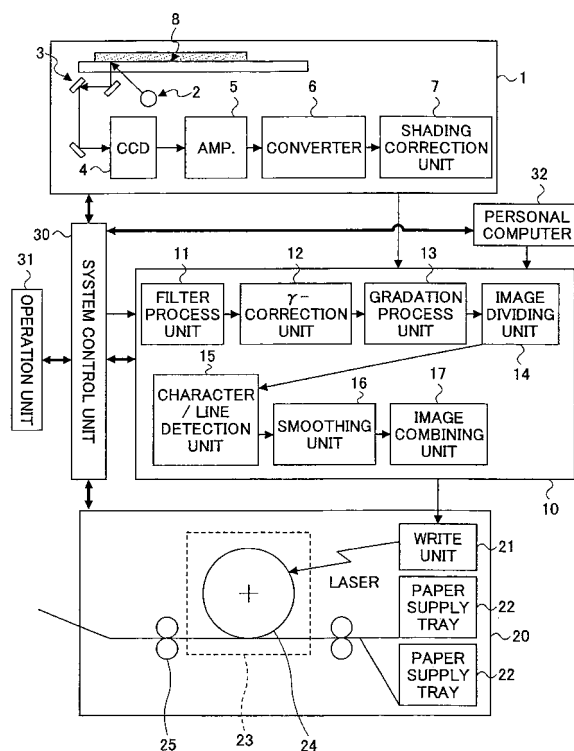
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(54) **Image processing apparatus, an image forming apparatus and an image processing method**

(57) An image processing apparatus can obtain a copy image having excellent reproducibility with a relatively simple structure of a data processing unit. The image processing apparatus generates image formation data by processing image data. A gradation processing unit binarizes the image data according to an error diffusion process. A character/line drawing detection unit determines whether a part of the binary image data corresponds to a character/line drawing portion, e.g. by comparing the number of transition points with a threshold value. An image processing unit applies an image processing, e.g. smoothing processing, to the part of the binary image data according to a result of determination of the character/line drawing detection unit.

FIG.1





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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search Berlin		Date of completion of the search 30 June 2006	Examiner Waern, G
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**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
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